

**CITY COUNCIL BUDGET SESSION  
CITY OF WATERTOWN  
May 10, 2016  
6:30 p.m.**

**Mayor Joseph M. Butler, Jr. Presiding**

**Present:** Council Member Cody J. Horbacz  
Council Member Stephen A. Jennings  
Council Member Teresa R. Macaluso  
Mayor Joseph M. Butler, Jr.

**Not Present:** Council Member Mark C. Walczyk (US Army Reserves Duty)

**Also Present:** Sharon Addison, City Manager

**City staff present:** James Mills, Eugene Hayes, Patrick Keenan, Peter Monaco, Michael Sligar, Mark Crandall, Kevin Patchen and Aaron Haverill

**DISCUSSION**

**Public Works Department**

Mayor Butler welcomed Superintendent of Public Works Eugene Hayes, Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Peter Monaco and Street and Sewer Maintenance Supervisor Patrick Keenan.

Starting with the Public Administration budget on page 56, Mayor Butler reviewed the 2015-16 accomplishments and the 2016-17 goals and objectives.

Mr. Hayes explained his department is a maintenance organization and is tasked with maintaining of all the streets, sanitary and storm lines, small parks, signage, fleet, urban forest and electric issues throughout the City.

Mayor Butler noted the salary increases across the board were approximately 5.5% and this reflects last year's 3% contingency that was in the budget but not reflected as an increase, and this year's 2.5% increase for management, which is still pending a decision.

James Mills, City Comptroller, explained the FY 2015-16 column is the 2014-15 budget for management salaries and the 3% raise that management did receive but was budgeted for in each fund's contingency account. He said that if you combined the two then the difference is only a 2.5% increase but this shows a compounded effect.

Mayor Butler noticed an increase in wages and asked if there are any personnel changes in the Public Works Administration.

Mr. Hayes replied the wages line reflects a single Senior Engineering Tech and stated this is a union position so this represents the step increase. He confirmed there are no other changes in personnel.

Council Member Horbacz asked why the miscellaneous line item has increased over the years, pointing out that it increased from approximately \$2,000 in FY 2014-2015 to \$9,000 in FY 2015-16.

Mr. Hayes explained that some of the PESH training and drug testing was under the various subaccounts but now it is all combined under this one. He noted \$5,000 for the current year is the impact that the FTA has had upon this unit due to necessary training for the transition from the 5311 Rural Transportation to a 5307 Urban Transportation.

Under the Central Garage budget on page 64, Mayor Butler mentioned the health insurance line item went up about 40%.

Mr. Mills explained that sometimes employees change from taking the buyout to adding a family plan. He confirmed for Mayor Butler that the retirement contribution is slowing decreasing.

Mr. Monaco explained for Council Member Horbacz the increase in contracted services, highlighting the ice control electric cables for the roof and the fuel master replacement. He stated that every vehicle has a fuel key and pin number so the fuel master control will track fuel usage and mileage for maintenance checks. He confirmed the fluctuation in wages over the past few years was due to an extended absence.

Regarding the Building and Grounds Maintenance budget on page 96, Mr. Hayes mentioned the City is moving into the MS4 rules and regulations so all of his divisions will have work related to the record keeping associated with this.

Mayor Butler reviewed the accomplishments for 2015-16 and goals for 2016-17 and pointed out the vehicle replacement that was requested.

Mr. Monaco stated the current vehicle is in really bad shape and stressed the need for its replacement because it is used every day.

Maintenance of Roads budget on page 100 was discussed. Mr. Hayes mentioned the Complete Streets program and that this budget will reflect the work done on the handicapped crosswalks and sidewalks. He advised the PROWAG design standards have been embraced by NYS DOT. He explained the CHIPS funding should be approximately \$450,000 - \$460,000 this year and reviewed the list of streets on page 278 to be paved.

Mr. Mills noted in the past few years the City implemented a policy that CHIPS funding would be used for both materials and labor. He confirmed that Flower Avenue East is scheduled for a complete rebuild in FY 2017-18.

Council Member Horbacz said he received complaints regarding the condition of streets during his campaign and wondered what is done for preventative maintenance.

Mr. Hayes indicated that cracks are filled every spring and fall and mentioned the Cartegraph program has the capability to track this but it is not fully in use yet.

Council Member Jennings mentioned complaints that he has received regarding Thompson Boulevard.

Mr. Hayes discussed the design of this street in detail, indicating that it is unique due to the trenches on each side and that any redesign would need to be careful not to disturb the water drainage coming down from Thompson Park.

Council Member Jennings noted that Knickerbocker Drive reconstruction remained as a project but was pushed out in the Capital Plan.

In response to Council Member Horbacz's questions, Mr. Monaco explained the street sweeper process and the cost effectiveness of renting the equipment.

Regarding the Snow Removal budget on page 104, Mr. Hayes indicated there were no staffing changes and explained the equipment requested on page 107-a and 107-b. He highlighted the advantages of the computer controlled material spreader with wet application, which will eliminate the need for a sander to follow the plow truck and also eliminate the need to have one additional person working that shift. He stressed this will result in a tremendous savings for the City.

Reviewing the Traffic Control and Lighting budget on page 111, Council discussed the utilities expense line and the possible use of LED lighting. Mr. Hayes advised that National Grid is reluctant to switch to LED lighting. He discussed the planned conversion of the traffic signal at the intersection of Thompson Boulevard and Washington Street and said it has to be designed by a professional engineer. He confirmed that this would include each of the crosswalks and the signal will give a pulse vibration as well as an audio message.

Regarding the Bus budget on page 116, Mr. Hayes stated the Transit Director position will be added due to the requirements of becoming an urbanized area under FTA. He discussed grants and the submittal process, stating there is more training involved. In addition, he explained the changes that he would like to make to the bus routes and mentioned the possibility of another transfer site at Jefferson Community College.

Under the Parking Facilities budget on page 120, Mr. Mills pointed out that the goal listed for the sidewalk changes at the Court Street Parking lot should be removed because the funding was cut from the budget.

The capital projects for Public Works were reviewed and Mr. Hayes discussed the need for the Bus Security Monitoring System (page 255) and the changes in the request for an Exterior Freight Delivery System (page 257) in detail. Council debated the Tandem Axle Dump Truck on page 269 and the Single Axle Dump Truck on page 271 as well as the Side-Load Refuse Packer on page 270. No changes were made to the capital requests.

Regarding the Sanitary Sewers budget on page 202, the accomplishments and goals were reviewed and Mr. Hayes indicated this budget is very similar to last year's.

### **Water and Sewer Department**

Water Superintendent Michael Sligar introduced Chief Operator of the Sewage Plant Mark Crandall, Supervisor of Maintenance and Distribution Kevin Patchen and Chief Operator of the Water Treatment Plant Aaron Haverill. Mr. Sligar advised that these accounts are pretty straightforward and are either on budget or under budget.

Under the Hydroelectric Production budget on page 108, Mr. Sligar stated there was a successful RFP for the contract operator of the facility. He pointed out that the contract is less this year than it was last year for the annual cost and that it is for three years. He added that it can be renewed for a total of nine years under this RFP. He said the goal is always to enhance production and mentioned the upgrade for the excitation system, the resurfacing of the intake chamber for unit #1 and the ice blasting of the coils in the stators and the rotors. He referred Council to page 262 for more information on the Turbine Intake Chambers Resurfacing project and said the plan is to do one per year for the next three years.

Discussing the Water Administration budget on page 175, Mr. Sligar said it runs parallel to the Sewer Administration budget on page 198 because the functions are similar and most of the items are split between the two. On page 176, he pointed out the decrease in wages as a result of the Water Meter Replacement program (page 284) which eliminated one Meter Reader position two years ago and will transition the other Meter Reader into a fulltime position within the department. He stressed this will decrease the overtime and the temporary work expenses.

Mr. Sligar reviewed the Source of Supply, Power and Pumping budget on page 179 and explained there was an increase in utilities and contracted services.

Mayor Butler asked if water and sewer rates would remain the same.

Mr. Sligar confirmed that they were for this budget year.

Mr. Mills stated there is no projection for a rate increase but mentioned that the Water Fund is more volatile than the Sewer Fund budget. He indicated that close attention needs to be paid to the amount of water sold through the DANC line to Fort Drum. He advised that due to their well situation he will monitor it closely, and if it begins to decrease quickly, he may suggest a midyear water rate change.

Discussing the Purification budget on page 182, Mr. Sligar discussed the changes in staff and noted there has been a shift with retirements and new employees being hired.

Ms. Addison stated that she accommodated the request for an internship and it is reflected by the \$4,000 listed under temporary wages.

Mr. Sligar informed Council of the equipment request for this upcoming year listed on page 186-a and 186-b.

Under the Transmission and Distribution budget on page 187, Mr. Sligar discussed the annual flushing program and responded to questions regarding the maintenance and replacement of the fire hydrants.

Council reviewed the status of the Meter Replacement Program and Mr. Sligar noted the City will spend \$1.7 million instead of the \$1.9 million projection.

Under the Sewage Treatment and Disposal budget on page 206, Mr. Sligar advised that the Lachenauer Drive Lift Station will not be done because the estimates came in higher than expected. He commented that this budget stayed in line with past years. In response to Council Member Jennings, he explained the training and certifications that are required for his staff.

Council Member Horbacz asked about the grant writing expense of \$30,000.

Ms. Addison explained the grant writing fees were split between the General Fund and the Sewer Fund.

Mr. Sligar stated this is due to the grants that are being done for this department, mentioning the Sludge Modification project and the Disinfection project.

The various capital projects were reviewed and Mr. Sligar summarized the project descriptions provided on each page.

Mr. Mills pointed out that the Sewer Fund has no rate increase projected this year and this is partly due to a transfer back to the General Fund of the unspent funds from the FY 2012-13 Western Outfall Trunk Sewer Rehab project from Chestnut to Ives Streets Project.

Work session ended at 8:49 p.m.

*Ann M. Saunders*  
City Clerk